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Ensuring that all Ohioans have access to quality and affordable health care is one of my top priorities in Congress. We must work to address the needs of the over 46 million Americans who lack health insurance. Today in the state of Ohio, 1.3 million people are uninsured, including more than 45,000 individuals in Ohio's 6th District. As a member of the Rural Health Care Task Force and the Blue Dog Health Care Task Force, I am deeply committed to strengthening the Medicare system; providing insurance to low income children; and making health care providers more accessible to our rural communities.

Securing the Future for our Children

Everyone deserves quality health care in this country. That includes our children. One of my first votes in the 111th Congress was to reauthorize the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP). This vital program extends health coverage to four million new children, providing a total of eleven million low-income children with much-needed health care. For Ohio this means that 231,000 children will have their coverage preserved and it will provide coverage for 119,000 uninsured children in Ohio who are currently eligible for, but not enrolled in SCHIP and Medicaid.

I am proud to report, that on February 4, 2009, President Obama signed this historic legislation into law.

Military and Veteran's Health Care

We have an obligation to care for and honor America's servicemen and women. With the VA expected to treat 5.8 million patients in 2009-including more than 330,000 Iraq and Afghanistan veterans-Congress has made it a priority to fund health care and benefits that they were promised and that they deserve. That is why in the 110th Congress I supported the [Wounded Warrior Assistance Act](#)

, which improves outpatient medical care for wounded service members at military health care facilities and improves the transition of wounded service members from the Armed Forces to the VA system. During the 111th

Congress, I cosponsored the Military Retirees' Health Care Protection Act, legislation prohibiting any increase in premiums, deductibles, copayments, or other charges prescribed by the Secretary of Defense for medical and dental health care coverage for military personnel.

Improving Access to Health Care in our Rural Communities

Rural practices and patients deserve a better partner in the federal government. The obstacles faced by health care providers and patients in rural areas are vastly different than those in urban areas. Today, most rural health care providers receive lower Medicare reimbursement rates - putting rural providers in a financial bind and making it difficult for doctors to keep their doors open for business. As a member the Rural Health Care Task Force, I will work to ensure that in tackling health care reform, our nation's rural communities receive the attention they deserve.

Health Care Reform

America's health care system is unsustainable. Well over a million Ohioans are uninsured or underinsured, leaving them unable to pay for their health care. Too many of Ohio's small businesses can no longer afford to provide health insurance to their employees and maintain a competitive edge in the marketplace. The Medicare Trust Fund could become insolvent by 2017, leaving millions of seniors at risk. Health care expenditures now consume 17 percent of the United State's gross domestic product and are projected to be 20 percent by 2017. It has become apparent that maintaining the status quo is not the answer to our country's growing health care problems.

In June, 2009 the House announced a draft proposal to reform our nation's health care system. And, after months of debate, in October 2009, the House introduced H.R. 3962, the Affordable Health Care for America Act, to reform our nation's health care system. From the beginning, I have said that I would vote for a bill that brought stability and security to the health care system, lowered the cost of health care, insured broader coverage, and did all this without increasing our deficit. Having met these goals, I was proud to support H.R. 3962, which passed in the House of Representatives on November 7, 2009. While this legislation is not perfect, it is an important first step in fixing our broken health care system. Now, this legislation awaits consideration in the Senate, where I will continue to carefully monitor its progress to ensure it

continues to meet the needs of the Ohioans in the 6th District.

For more on my work with health care, click [here](#) .

You can find more information on comprehensive health care reform here:



